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Specially interesting were some Revolutionary waistcoats on which were embroidered the Tree of Liberty and the Phrygian Cap. A sword-belt worn at Waterloo by the First Napoleon brought 91 francs, a musket given by the First Consul to Citizen Thurlot for his bravery at Hohenlinden 160 francs, an Empire umbrella in blue silk 106 francs, and nineteen corsets of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries from 10 francs to 50 francs each.

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For several years past a number of prominent Parisian artists have had frequent occasion to complain of the rapid discoloration of many of their most important canvases, and a system of warfare has been carried on not only between them and the vendors of colors, but also between the latter and the manufacturers of these articles. At a recent meeting of the artistic fraternity a few days since, a petition was drawn up and addressed to the President of the Municipal Council begging him in the interest of French art to have the various materials sold by the *marchands de couleurs* officially analyzed by the municipal laboratory. In this way the quality of the substances or the raw material employed in their manufacture could be definitely known. Upwards of forty artists have signed the document, among them being MM. Puvis de Chavannes, Jules Lefebvre, Gérôme, Detaille, Benjamin Constant, Gervex, Carolus Duran, J. P. Laurens and Henner. Exactly what will be the result of the affair remains to be seen. The French Republic can guard itself and its inhabitants against the adulteration of sugar, wine and food stuffs. Can it dictate to manufacturers of artists' materials what or what they shall not use in the making of paint?

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In order to render the French public more familiar with the works of modern Dutch painters, the Arts Club of Rotterdam has organized in Paris an exhibition which certainly calls for the highest praise. The exhibit, which is located in the Pavillon de la Ville de Paris, behind the Palais de l'Industrie, and off the Champs Elysées, contains the works of many men who, in spite of their conspicuous talent, are little known outside the land of dykes and windmills. In any notice of modern works from the Netherlands those of Jozef Israëls naturally occupy first place. The great artist is represented by fifteen of his best paintings, nearly all of which are the property of J. Staats Forbes, a gentleman well known to art lovers, more particularly from

the liberal manner in which he is always ready to lend all or a portion of the contents of his gallery for purposes of public exhibition. Among them are the familiar old man and his dog, known in this instance as "Old Friends"—the gem of the collection—"The Fisherman's Wife," "Prayer Before Meat," and "Grandfather's Comfort." Gerke Henkes, whose versatility is not the least conspicuous feature of his talent, sends an interesting selection. His "Dorcas Meeting," showing a group of old women sitting at a table knitting stockings, is full of quaint humor. Two other canvases by the same artist, namely, a "Stoker in a Distillery," with a highly praiseworthy contrast of day and artificial light, and a charming interior, goes far towards proving that the spirit of Teniers still inspires some of his countrymen. Paintings by H. W. Mesdag, Mme. Rönnér and others complete the exhibit.

* * *

L'Illustration publishes this week, as a colored supplement to its unusually interesting pages, a lithographic reproduction of a painting by Edmond Aimé Geoffroy, entitled "La Sortie de l'Ecole." The picture, which represents half a dozen of youngsters, girls and boys, coming out of school in a snow storm, one of those flurries so frequent in Paris during the winter months, is a gem. Nothing has been published in the holiday numbers of the Parisian weeklies that can compare with it, search the Christmas issue of the *Illustration* as well. Geoffroy, who is perhaps best known as a painter of portraits, long since proved himself a master of genre, and no better evidence of the fact could be given than this simple yet charming bit of child life. Those of my readers who can obtain the *Illustration*, if, indeed, it is obtainable in America, will do well to buy it.

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To the general regret of the artistic world, the proposed collective exhibition of the works of Meissonier has, for the present at least, been abandoned, and the committee of arrangements has resigned its functions. Some family troubles or misunderstandings is the reason assigned to its indefinite postponement. The fact undoubtedly is, that Charles Meissonier and his step-mother, who were barely civil to each other while the head of the house was alive, have agreed to permanently disagree now that the restraint of the master has been removed from them.

JOHN PRESTON BEECHER.

PARIS, January 5, 1892.

CANTON CURIOS

(Special Correspondence of THE COLLECTOR.)

CANTON, Nov. 15, 1891.

THIS is the New York of the far east, a great city of at least two million population, and with suburbs containing as many more. It is also the ideal city of the collector. In curios, metal-work and bric-à-brac in general it beats the world. You cannot buy an old master here, or a Barye bronze, a master moulding by Cellini, or an antique Stradivarius. It would be difficult, also, to add to your precious store of Valenciennes and Alençon. But in arms and armor, pipes, canes, buttons, statuary, wood-carvings, porcelain, glass, bronze, silk embroidery, ivory, ebony, jade, agate, silver, gold and precious stones, there is not a city in America or Europe which will compare with this Mongolian metropolis. The mere description of its wares and merchandise would fill the columns of THE COLLECTOR for a decade. And above all, my dear editor, things are cheap. Labor in the east is the cheapest article extant, no matter whether skilled or unskilled. The coolie who carries your chair in the blazing sun, and the artist who consumes a year in fashioning a dozen concentric revolving ivory balls, receive nearly the same miserable pittance for their toil. For \$5,000 a man could fill his house with "objects of virtue and bigotry" and have a collection of as many pieces as dollars. I saw a bronze in Chicago which was priced for \$75 whose original I can buy in Canton for \$3; a Majolica group in New York for \$100 whose copies are for sale here for \$2.50! Why does not the intellectual collector sail westward for his summer vacation instead of going eastward and being fleeced by the multitudinous harpies of Europe?

It is unnecessary to touch upon the fields made familiar to American readers by authors, tourists and dealers. It would be like carrying coals to Newcastle or Pittsburgh. A few words, however, may be of interest upon these things which thus far are comparatively unknown in the United States.

First of all is the humble button. The Celestial connoisseur pays as much attention to these objects as Speaker Husted to his neckties, or Mr. C—V—, of New York, to his two thousand and odd canes. Chinese buttons are invariably round, and as large as a marrow-fat pea. The workingman buys his of tailors, who make them from cotton, linen, silk, hemp, horse-hair, twine and beads. The Chinese gentleman's buttons are more elegant and expensive, being made of jade, agate, onyx, carnelian, crystal, garnet, amethyst, opal, cat's-eye, tiger's-eye, obsidian, silver or gold. They are made in simple globes, polished and shanked. The prices range from 3 cents apiece to \$20 a dozen. They also come engraved with monograms, inscriptions and figures. Such buttons come high, and bring from ten to twenty times the figures named. They also come encrusted with jeweled flakes, precious stones and metals. Most precious of all are silver and gold buttons, which are open-work, hollow spheres, where every bit of metal forms part of leaf, flower, animal or human figure. Imagine a dozen gold buttons at \$250; each button a perfect picture in itself!

Next are what may be called the siliceous stores. They are establishments that deal in ornaments made from the precious and semi-precious varieties of quartz. The artists are experts not satisfied with the products of China, and import raw materials from all parts of the world. The favorite stone in the markets of the empire is jade; next to it are rock crystal, agate and onyx. Then follows the long list of wood-agate, moss-agate, chalcedony, carnelian, chrysoprase, garnet, sardonyx, rose quartz, moonstone, blue flint and the numberless other varieties of silica. Though every kind is hard and brittle, the workers care nothing, but fashion all into ear-rings, breast-pins, watch-charms, bracelets, amulets, statuettes, seals, rings, pen-holders and altar-pieces. I will not mention prices lest I incur the incredulity of some good reader. It will suffice to state, however, that the Cantonese artists produce jade bracelets and agate statues which bring thousands of dollars apiece to their makers.

I met an opium farmer who wore a handsome thumb ring of the finest jade—it looked to me like a green-glass napkin-ring—which he said cost him \$2,200!

What strike the visitor's fancy the most are the odd and pretty little designs in frosted silver. They are exquisitely carved, and in many cases perfectly beautiful: none more than an inch in length, and not heavier than an eighth of an ounce. One series consists of exclusively Chinese subjects, and comprises such every-day things as pagodas, sampans, junks, sedan-chairs, slippers, opium-pipes, swords, hats, halberds, hubble-bubbles, bronzes, rickshaws, umbrellas and the like. Another series of silver ornaments is of distinguished men, and includes miniature effigies of Confucius, Buddha, Zan Zoon, Le-Hung-Chang and other notables, heroic, historic, mythic and actual. A third consists of animals, wild and domestic, and contains the horse, cow, buffalo, pig, dog, goat, sheep, deer, lion, tiger, cat, bear, wolf, fox, aurochs, rat, rabbit, frog, tortoise, serpent, crocodile, shark and whale. Still another is of mythical animals, such as the dragon, griffin, Celestial Dog, Heavenly Poodle, Phoenix and Sacred Bird. These dainty works of art are worn upon bangle-bracelets, necklaces, belts, watch-chains, finger-rings, hairpins and breast-pins. They are also used as parlor ornaments, being exhibited in glass-cases, backed with black velvet. They are as a whole very pretty and very cheap. They seldom cost more than 35 per cent above their weight in silver. They find a ready sale among Chinese women, especially concubines. Some of these wear two and three bracelets on each arm, and cover the circumference with these tiny figures. They are certainly handsomer and more artistic than the "monogrammed" coins with which American girls load their rings and bracelets, and in addition to this virtue, if such it be, would make a very attractive exhibit in the drawing-room of an American home.

EDWARD BEDLOE.